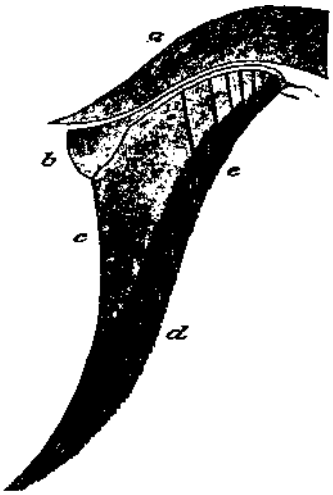
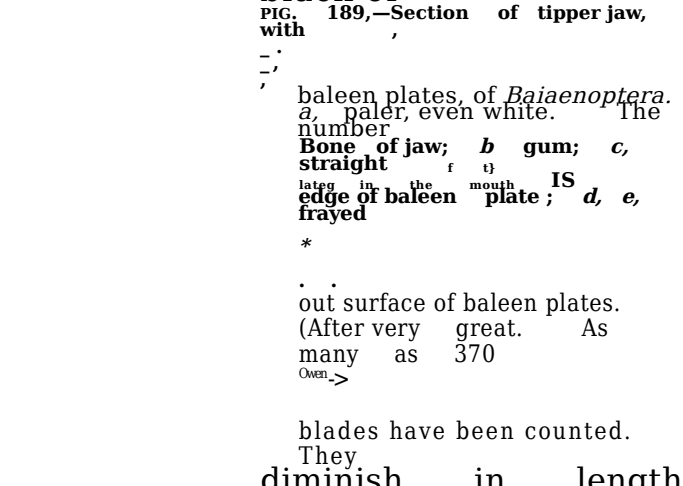
a small Rorqual. But even these are larger than the majority of Toothed Whales.

The most characteristic feature by which the Whalebone Whales are to be distinguished from other Whales is that which gives to them their name, the presence of whalebone. Whale-bone is a horny product of the epithelium lining the mouth, and is comparable to an exaggeration of the



transverse ridges which are found in the mouths of all mammals upon the palate. In non - Cetacean mammals these ridges vary in depth, and are arranged as a rale transversely, but with an oblique inclination. This is precisely how the plates of baleen are disposed in the mouth of a Whale. Each piece of " bone " is triangular in shape, the broader end being that of attachment while it narrows gradually; the inner side of the

blades is frayed out into a number of threads which form the straining apparatus. The plates vary in length up to as great an extreme length as 13 feet, which occurs in the Eight Whale at TO ion a *• * - ^ times. The colour is black or



PIG. 189,—Section of tipper jaw, with baleen plates, of *Baiaenoptera. a,* paler, even white. The number

Bone of jaw; *b* gum; *c,* straight lateg in the mouth **IS edge of baleen plate ; *d, e,* frayed**

out surface of baleen plates. (After Owen.)

very great. As many as 370 blades have been counted. They diminish in length towards both ends of the series. Though whalebone has been in use for a long period, whence the whalebone came was formerly one of those -things not generally known*

A very prevalent notion was that the whalebone formed the eyelids or perhaps the eyelashes of the creature. Sealiger, commenting upon Aristotle, held that the whale had " lamellae upon the eyebrows, which, when the head is plunged below the surface, were raised by the water; but when the animal raised its liead